

The term *liturgical drama* also provides a useful means of distinguishing the Latin plays of the Church from miracle and mystery plays in the vernacular. By the end of the thirteenth century, the independent development of liturgical drama seems to have been completed. In cathedrals and especially in monasteries, performances of Latin plays as adjuncts of the liturgy continued well into the sixteenth century and perhaps even later. After 1300, however, religious plays in the language of the people captured the popular imagination and experienced the greatest development. Modern terminology makes a distinction—not observed in the Middle Ages—between miracle plays, which portray the miracles of the Virgin Mary or the lives and miracles of saints, and mystery plays based on stories from the Bible. Both kinds are found in Latin plays of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as we have seen, and the same centuries saw the first appearances of both kinds in French. From the beginning, apparently, vernacular plays were not performed in church as an addition to the official liturgy, although throughout their history the great majority continued to betray their ancestry by ending with the *Te Deum*. Despite the occasional introduction of other liturgical chants, perhaps the chief distinction—after that of language—between liturgical and vernacular drama was the latter's use of spoken rather than sung dialogue. In large part, presumably, this change occurred because the actors were now laymen, not clerics who were trained singers. Minstrels often took part in performances both as singers and instrumentalists, but more and more the miracle and mystery plays became spoken dramas with incidental music.

Freed from the restrictions of the Church, the vernacular plays treated their Biblical or legendary subject matter with great freedom and a lively sense of humor. Scenes with the devil in hell seem to have been particularly popular. More than miracle plays, mysteries grew in length and elaboration until, by the fifteenth century, their performances often extended over several days and covered the entire story of the Bible from the Creation of Man to the Last Judgment. Music continued to serve as an ornamental adjunct to these plays, but little that was composed specifically for them has survived. The texts that were to be sung were often in the poetic forms characteristic of secular song from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, and we may assume that their musical settings were also characteristic of their age. In some cases, indeed, we find no more than a direction that some chanson or motet should be sung. Suggestions for the use of instrumental music are common but even less specific as to what the musicians played. Because of this characteristic indifference to music on the part of playwrights, or scribes, the mystery plays must remain more a part of theatrical than of musical history. And that, after all, is perhaps where they belong. Rather than foreshadowing the development of opera, they are much more the ancestors of Shakespeare.

## CHAPTER VIII

### The Rise of Polyphony

Thus far we have been concerned with musical embellishments of the liturgy that retained the general characteristics of plainchant. We must now consider another musical embellishment, the simultaneous sounding of more than one melody, which we know as *polyphony*. To call polyphony an embellishment of the liturgy is merely to state its primary function during the first centuries of its recorded existence. Beginning as an elaboration of plainchant, polyphony served almost exclusively as a means of increasing the splendor and solemnity of church services from the ninth century until well into the thirteenth. It may be regarded, then, as a kind of trope in which new music appeared together with the chant instead of being added to it by monophonic extensions. Significantly, polyphony originated and was first cultivated extensively in the same centuries and in some of the same places that produced the large repertoires of tropes and sequences. Both types of music quite evidently resulted from the same need to find an outlet for creative activity. Both fulfilled that need in the most logical way by expanding and enriching the only large musical repertory then existing.

The invention of polyphony was undoubtedly the most significant event in the history of Western music. Once the concept had been accepted, organization of the vertical (harmonic) dimension of music became a major preoccupation of both theorists and composers. That it has remained a major preoccupation ever since is evident in the common differentiation of musical styles on the basis of their distinctive methods of harmonic organization. This would seem to be wholly justified, since it is precisely the systematic organization of vertical sounds that distinguishes Western music from all other musics, whether they be the products of primitive peoples or of highly sophisticated Oriental cultures. The distance between a work of the late twelfth century and one of the twentieth may seem immense. But the latter could not have been written if the development of the former had never taken place. And both stand in opposition to plainchant in their concern with the combination of simultaneous musical sounds.

Because the invention of polyphony thus altered the course of musical evolution in the Western world, the circumstances of that invention

become a matter of extraordinary historical interest. In this chapter we shall trace the development of polyphony from its earliest manifestations to its first flowering in the twelfth-century repertoires of St. Martial and Santiago de Compostela. In the course of so doing, it should become evident that we are dealing with music of much more than purely historical interest. Approached with an open mind and a lively imagination, the polyphony of the Middle Ages reveals itself as a worthy counterpart to the great churches and cathedrals in which it was performed.

### THEORETICAL DESCRIPTIONS AND EXAMPLES OF EARLY POLYPHONY

Polyphony began as an unwritten accompaniment of plainchant. We must depend on theoretical treatises, therefore, for knowledge of the earliest stages of its development. This situation gives rise to a number of difficulties. The brevity and ambiguity with which medieval authors described contemporaneous practices often make it difficult to reconstruct those practices after a lapse of many centuries. Even with seemingly explicit musical examples we sometimes find ourselves on shaky ground. As we shall see, problems of accidentals remain unsolved. The examples are generally short and are based on a limited number of simple, often fragmentary chants. They sometimes illustrate specific procedures very well, but we cannot be certain that those procedures would be applicable throughout a complete or more elaborate chant. Indeed, we cannot know how accurately the theoretical examples reflect the actual performance practices of the time. The theorists' need to simplify and systematize must inevitably distort the natural tendency of performers toward complexity and freedom in improvisation. But theoretical descriptions of early polyphony are all we shall ever have, and we must learn from them what we can.

The concept of harmonic consonance was apparently known to St. Augustine and Boethius. Both writers—along with others in the early Middle Ages—made statements that *may* refer to something more than simple monophonic singing. Not until late in the ninth century, however, do we find descriptions of part singing that establish its distinguishing name, organum, and provide decipherable musical examples. Perhaps the greatest value of the earlier writings, however vague and ambiguous their references to part singing may be, is their confirmation of the probability that organum as described in the ninth-century documents was neither a sudden nor even a recent innovation. These late treatises, then, attempt to describe and systematize practices that may well have been widespread and of long standing. With them we pass

from the conjectures of prehistory to the written record of polyphonic development.

Two nearly contemporary authors, Regino of Prüm (d. 915) and Hucbald (c. 840–930), wrote treatises with the same title, *De harmonica institutione* (Concerning Harmonic Instruction). Both introduce the term *organum* (pl. *organa*), and both attempt to define consonance and dissonance. Hucbald in particular makes it clear that organum involves the simultaneous sounding of different tones:

Consonance is the judicious and harmonious mixture of two tones, which exists only if two tones, produced from different sources, meet in one joint sound, as happens when a boy's voice and a man's voice sing the same thing, or in that which they commonly call *Organum*.<sup>1</sup>

More detailed descriptions with musical examples are given in two of the most important treatises of the period, the *Musica enchiridis* (Music Manual) and the *Scholia enchiridis* (Commentary on the Manual). Although these works were formerly attributed to Hucbald, their authorship is now in dispute. Dispute has also arisen as to their date of composition, which has been variously placed from c. 850 to c. 900. There can be little doubt, however, that they both describe the organum referred to in the authentic Hucbald treatise as it was practiced in the latter half of the ninth century.

### PARALLEL ORGANUM

According to the *Enchiridis* treatises, the different types of organum they illustrate all derive from the application of one basic principle: the duplication of a preexistent plainchant in parallel motion at the interval of an octave, a fifth, or a fourth. The plainchant is called the *vox principalis* or principal voice. When it is doubled by one other voice, the *vox organalis* (organal voice), the result is *simple organum*. Further doubling of one or both voices at the octave yields *composite organum*. To these distinctions, which are made in the treatises themselves, we must add another that is not named but is implicit in the musical examples. When parallel motion is rigidly maintained, modern writers generally speak of *strict* or *parallel organum*. When parallel motion is temporarily abandoned, usually at the beginning and end of phrases, there is less agreement as to what the resulting kind of organum should be called. Some writers refer to it as *free organum*. Others treat it as a subspecies of parallel organum. The *Enchiridis* treatises imply that a proper designation would be *modified parallel organum*. To avoid confusion with the free organum of the eleventh century, this designation will be adopted here.

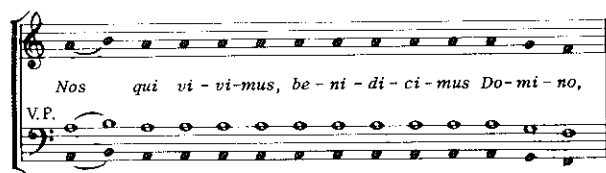
All musical examples in the *Scholia enchiridis* use the same psalm-tone

1. Reese, MMA, p. 253.

formula, a variant of the *tonus peregrinus*.<sup>2</sup> The *Scholia* begins with organum at the Octave above and below (Example VIII-1a), which, "since it is easier and more open, is called greatest and first." Next comes organum at the fifth below (Example VIII-1b). Various octave doublings convert this two-voice structure into different types of composite organum (Example VIII-1c). In the second and third types, dropping the original organal voice leaves the chant in the principal voice as the lowest part.

Example VIII-1: *Parallel Organum at the Octave and Fifth*

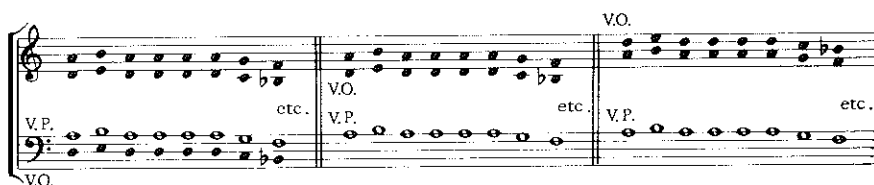
a. AT THE OCTAVE ABOVE AND BELOW



b. AT THE FIFTH BELOW



c. THREE FORMS OF COMPOSITE ORGANUM AT THE FIFTH



We who are living will bless the Lord from this time forth and forever.—  
Psalm 113:27 (115:18)

Although they use different examples, the *Enchiriadis* treatises agree in all essentials in describing organum at the octave and fifth. When it comes

2. LU, p. 117. For a translation with complete examples from the *Scholia enchiriadis*, see Strunk, SR, pp. 126-38.

to organum at the fourth, however, their opinions diverge. The *Musica* gives an example of strict parallel motion at the fourth below the chant and says that the voices sound agreeably together (Example VIII-2a). Later, the author says that the fourth is often not suitable for organum because of the frequent appearance of augmented fourths (tritone). To avoid this disagreeable interval, the singer must modify the organal voice as shown in the oft-quoted setting of *Rex caeli* (Example VIII-2b). The *Scholia* takes the position that strict parallel organum at the fourth is never possible, for the organal voice cannot "agree with the principal voice so absolutely as is the case with the other consonances." Unlike the example of *Rex caeli*, modified parallel organum in the *Scholia* begins on a perfect fourth, but it does reach a unison by contrary motion at the end of the psalm-tone formula (Example VIII-2c). As in parallel organum at the fifth, octave doublings then create composite forms of modified parallel organum. These are particularly interesting because of the new intervals and intervallic progressions that are introduced, especially in cases where the lower organal voice is again omitted and the plainchant becomes the lowest part (Example VIII-2d).

Example VIII-2: *Parallel and Modified Parallel Organum at the Fourth*

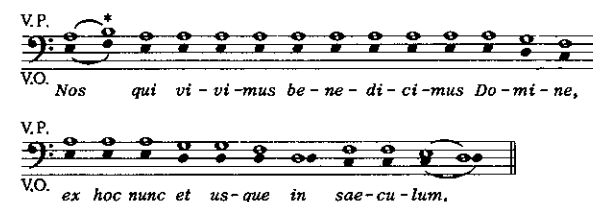
a. *Musica enchiriadis*: SIMPLE ORGANUM

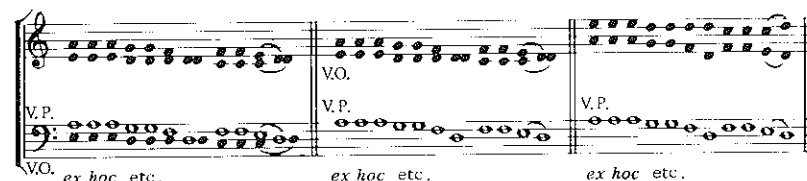


b. *Musica enchiriadis*: MODIFIED PARALLEL ORGANUM



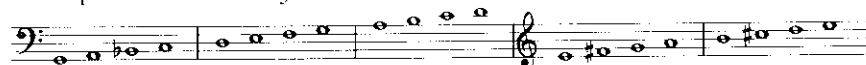
c. *Scholia enchiriadis*: MODIFIED PARALLEL ORGANUM



d. *Scholia enchiriadis*: COMPOSITE FORMS OF MODIFIED PARALLEL ORGANUM

- Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.—From the *Te Deum*
- King of heaven, Lord of the sounding sea, of the shining Titan sun and the wretched earth, thy humble servants, worshiping thee with devout song as thou hast bidden, earnestly entreat thee to free them from their various ills.
- We who are living will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.—Psalm 113:27 (115:18)

The supposed need for modification of parallel organum at the fourth results from the use of a scale peculiar to the *Enchiriadis* treatises. This scale consists of the arbitrary and artificial arrangement of disjunct tetrachords shown in Example VIII-3. Containing no diminished fifths, the scale was obviously designed to accommodate simple organum at the fifth. It works for nothing else, however, because it produces augmented octaves as well as tritones. The author ignored this problem in organum at the octave and in composite forms, and, perhaps through carelessness, he left tritones in some of his examples (marked \* in Example VIII-2a and c). In any case, the artificiality of the scale makes the explanation of modified parallel organum as an avoidance of tritones somewhat suspect. It is quite possible that the *Enchiriadis* treatises confused the picture considerably by attempting to find a common principle in two distinct practices.

Example VIII-3: Scale of the *Enchiriadis* Treatises

Singing in parallel octaves was known to the Greeks, who called it *magadizing*, but it is such a natural phenomenon that there is no need to look for Greek influence in the emergence of organum. As Hucbald's *De harmonica* suggests, men and boys singing together would unconsciously produce strict organum at the octave. Parallel motion at the fourth or fifth would probably require a more conscious effort, but even this procedure seems less strange when we remember that the most comfortable ranges for bass and tenor voices lie approximately a fifth apart. Strict organum, whether simple or composite, never needed to be written down, and for performers the problem of tritones would

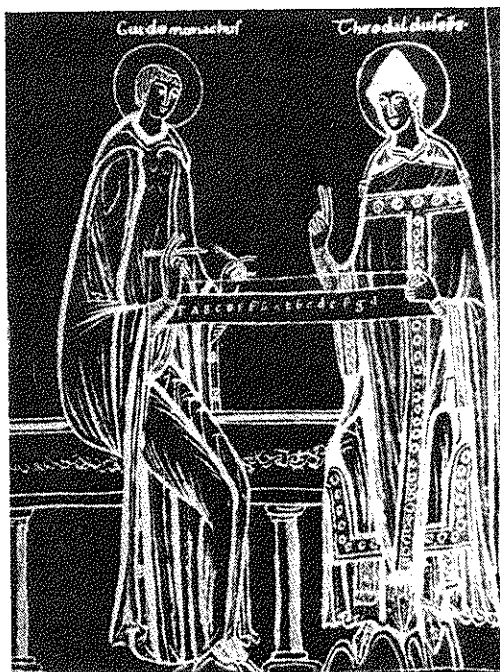
never arise. Once each singer had settled on his starting pitch, he would merely reproduce the intervals of the original melody, just as he would join in unison singing at a pitch level most convenient for the group as a whole. Avoidance of the tritone, then, would concern only the theorist who was trying to explain and *notate* the improvised practices of his time.

Thus the explanation of modified parallel organum becomes further suspect, and we must seek its origin elsewhere. The most likely source that has been suggested is *heterophony*, a practice also known to the Greeks and common in both Oriental and primitive music. Heterophony, meaning "different sounds," results when two or more persons simultaneously perform differing versions of the same melody. Probably introduced accidentally, the different vertical sounds of heterophony must have proved attractive enough to be deliberately cultivated, and heterophonic performance became the basis of ensemble playing in much Oriental music. Because heterophony often involves partial duplication of the basic melody at intervals other than the unison or octave (Example VIII-4), the attempt to explain it as a modification of parallel organum need not surprise us. We may suspect, however, that the *Enchiriadis* treatises give oversimplified examples of a procedure that, in practice, resulted in a more elaborate variation of the original chant.

Example VIII-4: *Heterophony—Modern Chinese*<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the origins of organum may have been and however faithfully the *Enchiriadis* treatises may reflect the practices of their time, it is with them that the recorded history of Western polyphony begins. Quite obviously, the strictly parallel duplication of a melody offered little stimulus for further development. Its chief contribution would have been to familiarize the ear with the sound of perfect consonances as harmonic intervals. Modified parallel organum presents a different picture, for it introduces procedures that constitute the first step in the direction of true polyphony. Strict parallelism is varied by both oblique and contrary motion. Equally important is the appearance of intervals other than perfect consonances: seconds and thirds in simple organum, sixths and sevenths in composite forms. The concept that a given melody could be enhanced by being combined with a new and completely different melody had not yet been grasped. But the technical means by which that concept could be realized were already at hand in modified parallel organum.

3. After E. Fischer, *SIMG*, 12 (1910-11), p. 192.



Guido d'Arezzo and Bishop Theobald with a monochord. From a twelfth-century manuscript.

## THE MICROLOGUS OF GUIDO D'AREZZO

After the *Enchiridis* treatises, more than a century elapsed before organum was again described, in the *Micrologus* (Little Discourse) of Guido d'Arezzo (d. 1050).<sup>4</sup> Although he acknowledged the continued existence of strict parallelism, Guido concerned himself primarily with modified parallel organum. In its formation, Guido rejected the fifth and minor second, thus limiting available intervals other than the unison to four: the perfect fourth, major and minor thirds, and the major second. Of these, the fourth occupies the highest rank, the minor third the lowest. Guido dealt particularly with the *occursus*, the coming together on a unison at the end of a phrase. He specified that a third progressing by contrary motion to a unison must be major, as must also be a second that proceeds to a unison by oblique motion. These concerns probably reflect the characteristic avoidance of semitone cadences in plainchant, but they also suggest that musicians were becoming aware of both the qualities of intervals and the effectiveness of oblique and contrary motion.

One innovation permitted by Guido was the crossing of the principal and organal voices (Example VIII-5c). That he also permitted more than one note in the principal voice against a single note in the organal voice is a common statement needing some qualification. Guido's musical examples, which are notated in letters, always seem to provide a strictly note-against-note setting. The organal voice sometimes reaches its final note first, however, and then repeats that note (or holds it?) until the

principal voice arrives at the final unison (see Example VIII-5a, b, and especially c).

### Example VIII-5: Examples of Organum from the *Micrologus* of Guido d'Arezzo

a.

Ip-si so - li

b.

Sex-ta ho - ra se - di su-per pu-te-um

c.

Sex-ta ho - ra se - di su-per pu-te-um

d.

Ve-ni-te ad - o-re-mus.

- a. To himself alone.
- b & c. At the sixth hour, he was seated on the well (see John 4:6). (A traditional melodic formula and text that identify the sixth mode)
- d. Come, let us adore.

From Guido's description, it would seem that organum had developed very little in over a century. This impression is contradicted to some extent by his musical examples. In some, the scarcity of fourths suggests that the preeminence of that interval may have been less clear-cut than Guido would have us believe. Even more striking is the tendency to avoid parallel motion in favor of a sort of drone in the organal voice, a tendency that reaches its ultimate in Example VIII-5c. Taken as a whole, Guido's illustration allows us to infer a richly varied practice of modified parallel organum in the first half of the eleventh century.

## FREE ORGANUM

During the second half of the century the rate of development accelerated, and by 1100 the restless search for new means of expression that was to characterize the subsequent history of Western music was in full swing. The great achievement of the century was the breaking away from the restrictions of parallel motion that Guido's *Micrologus* had already foreshadowed. The result was a new kind of polyphony that well deserves its common designation as *free organum*.

4. Guidonis Aretini, *Micrologus*, ed. J. Smits van Waesberghe, CSM, 4 (AIM, 1955).



however, that improvisation did not cease with the advent of composed organum. Indeed, the tradition of improvised polyphony persisted for centuries. Occasionally its influence may be seen in written music, but our meager knowledge of it continues to be derived chiefly from theoretical sources. In the Middle Ages, improvisation seems to have remained largely a matter of note-against-note polyphony with a considerable amount of parallel motion, but the extent to which virtuoso performers may have embellished this simple structure we cannot know. From now on, it is primarily in the preserved collections of composed music that we must follow the continuing development of medieval polyphony.

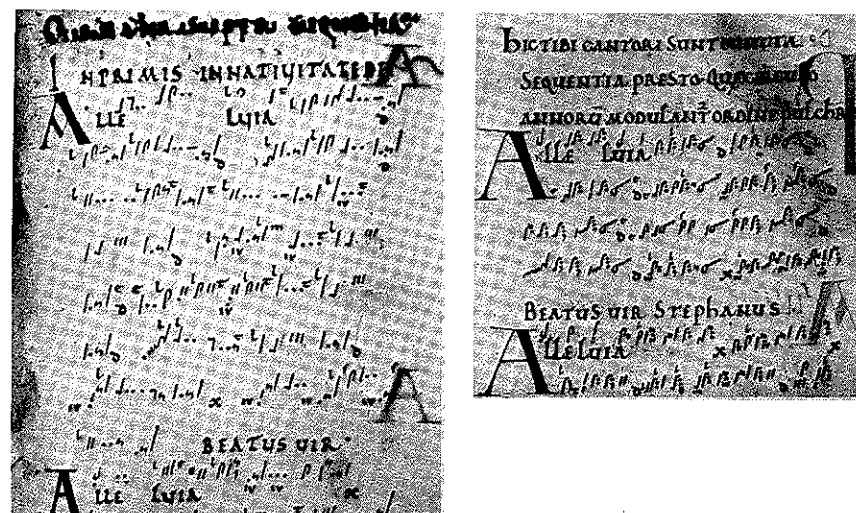
### ORGANUM IN PRACTICAL SOURCES

Because there must always be some doubt as to the accuracy with which theorists describe contemporary practices, we welcome with relief the first appearance of organum in manuscripts intended for practical use. Despite the frequent inadequacy of the notation, we can now get a much clearer idea of how organum was performed, and we can follow the stylistic developments that rapidly outdistanced the oversimplified theoretical descriptions. In addition, we can now determine which chants were commonly sung in polyphony.

### THE WINCHESTER TROPERS

The first practical collection of organum is found in the later of two English manuscripts known as the Winchester Tropers. The earlier of the two (dated c. 980) is already familiar as the source of the oldest version of the Easter *Quem quaeritis* play with music. The second Winchester troper is an eleventh-century revision of the first, but it also contains a supplement of more than 150 organa, i.e., chants with an added organal voice. That the organa and the Easter play both appear in collections devoted primarily to tropes and sequences is a clear indication of the unity of purpose behind these seemingly disparate forms. The Winchester Tropers also bear witness to the rapidity with which liturgical embellishments, including polyphony, spread throughout western Europe. It is believed that their contents, rather than being of English composition, came from the repertory of a French religious center, possibly in the Loire valley.

That the second Winchester Troper was a revision of the first probably accounts for the curious placement of the added organal voices in a section by themselves instead of with the chants for which they provide



Two-part organum from Winchester, early eleventh century. The page on the left contains the organal voices for the Alleluias with sequentiae on the right (MS Bodley 775 Troparium).

a polyphonic embellishment.<sup>9</sup> Scholars have attempted to reconstruct some of these pieces, but the notation in neumes without staff lines and only partially heightened creates far greater difficulties than the physical separation of the voices. Only the chant melodies appear in later sources in more precise notation. Reliably accurate transcriptions of the organal voices remain unattainable. Nevertheless, certain aspects of the musical style can be determined. It is clear that the basic style of the organa is note-against-note polyphony. Parallel motion still predominates, but contrary motion is not confined to cadential passages presumably leading to a unison. The occasional appearance of contrary motion within phrases marks a tentative step toward greater melodic independence of the organal voice. More important than these stylistic characteristics are the size and nature of the Winchester repertory. About a third of the collection is devoted to settings of Alleluias, another third to Office responsories. The rest of the repertory includes a few Introit tropes, twelve Kyries and eight Glorias, some of which are troped, seven Sequences, and nineteen Tracts. The concentration on responsorial and other melismatic chants is particularly significant, because it foreshadows the chief concern of Parisian composers in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

No large body of organa from the eleventh century which dates after the Winchester Tropers is known to exist. Scattered examples, from a single piece to one or two pages, have turned up in some dozen manuscripts.<sup>10</sup> Even this slim repertory remains in part unknowable because of imprecise notation. Only a few pieces notated in letters and a few

9. See Grout, HWM, p. 62, for facsimiles of a troped Kyrie and its organal voice.

10. Listed in L. Spiess, "An Introduction to the Pre-St. Martial Practical Sources of Early Polyphony," *Speculum*, 22 (1947), p. 16.



more with neumes on staff lines give some idea of the state of organum at the end of the eleventh century. Among the most important of these pieces is a group of five Alleluias, some of them fragmentary, from a manuscript at Chartres.<sup>11</sup> These Alleluias are of particular interest because they are set in the manner that became standard for responsorial chants in the twelfth century. Organum is used only for the solo sections of the chants. Choral sections, which are not written out in the Chartres manuscript, are sung in their original monophonic form.<sup>12</sup> This alternation of polyphony and plainchant in the Chartres Alleluias marks the establishment of a principle that the Church continued to apply in various ways for many centuries.

Another significant aspect of the Alleluias from Chartres is their increased use of contrary motion and of intervals that contemporary theorists regarded as dissonances. According to the calculations of Dom Anselm Hughes, a majority of intervals in the five Alleluias are perfect consonances, but more than a quarter of the total number of intervals are thirds. Moreover, these thirds appear several times in groups of two or three in parallel motion. Most surprising of all is the presence of 23 seconds, although it should be remembered that Guido d'Arezzo ranked the major second above the minor third.<sup>13</sup> Other surviving examples of contemporary organum are too few in number to permit us to say that the Chartres Alleluias are typical of the later eleventh century. John Cotton's brief example contains two thirds, one second, and one seventh in a total of only ten intervals; but, as we have seen, the examples in *Ad organum faciendum* rely almost exclusively on perfect consonances. Of the twenty-four intervals in the two settings of an Alleluia melody (Example VIII-7), only one is an imperfect consonance, a minor third. In contrast to these more conservative examples, the Alleluias from Chartres, and a few other pieces from the decades just before and after 1100, show that some composers were in advance of some theorists in using intervals other than perfect consonances.

#### MELISMATIC ORGANUM OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY: THE SCHOOL OF ST. MARTIAL AT LIMOGES

The development of polyphony in the twelfth century takes us back to Limoges and the region of south-central France that had already been active in the creation of tropes and sequences and that will, in the same

11. Transcriptions in NOHM, 2, pp. 282-84. The notation of another set of Alleluias from Chartres cannot be transcribed. For a facsimile of one of these pieces, see Parry, NMM, Pl. XXc.

12. For a complete Alleluia from Chartres with both polyphonic and monophonic sections, see HAM, No. 26c.

13. Exact figures may be found in NOHM, 2, p. 284.

century, see the birth of lyric song in the vernacular (see Chapter XI). Although the organum of this period is commonly attributed to a "School of St. Martial" at Limoges, arguments for the existence of such a school rest primarily on the large collection of manuscripts from the Abbey of St. Martial now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. More than twenty musical manuscripts attest to the richness of the St. Martial library, but new evidence supports the contention that only three or four of the manuscripts originated at the Abbey. Some collections of monophonic tropes and sequences came from the Limoges area; others came from as far away as Narbonne and Toulouse. Three of the four manuscripts that contain polyphony belonged to the Abbey library, but we cannot be sure that they are the product of a School of St. Martial. The fourth collection of polyphony, now in the British Museum, never formed part of the St. Martial library and appears to come from a religious center near the eastern end of the Franco-Spanish border. Even the broader designation "School of Limoges" would thus seem to be a misnomer. Limoges may well have been an active center for the composition and performance of organum, and to avoid confusion we should probably continue to speak of St. Martial polyphony. We must remember, however, that the collections of that polyphony are not the product of a single monastery. Instead, they represent a tradition of polyphonic performance throughout southwestern France and the northern regions of Spain.

The sources of St. Martial polyphony contain some sixty-four different pieces that fall into three main groups. The largest consists of strophic poems that some of the sources identify as *versus*. This term is nearly synonymous with *conductus*, and the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. The *versus* are Latin sacred songs that functioned primarily as unofficial additions to the liturgy on important feast days. Tropes of *Benedicamus Domino* constitute the next most frequent type of text in St. Martial polyphony. The third and smallest of the three main groups consists of sequences. The scarcity of established liturgical chants in this polyphonic repertory does not necessarily mean that such chants were always sung in their original monophonic form. Considerable evidence points to a continuing tradition of improvised polyphony in the style of free organum. Still operative in the sixteenth century, this tradition seems to have little to do with the stylistic development of organum in the twelfth-century repertories of Limoges and Paris.

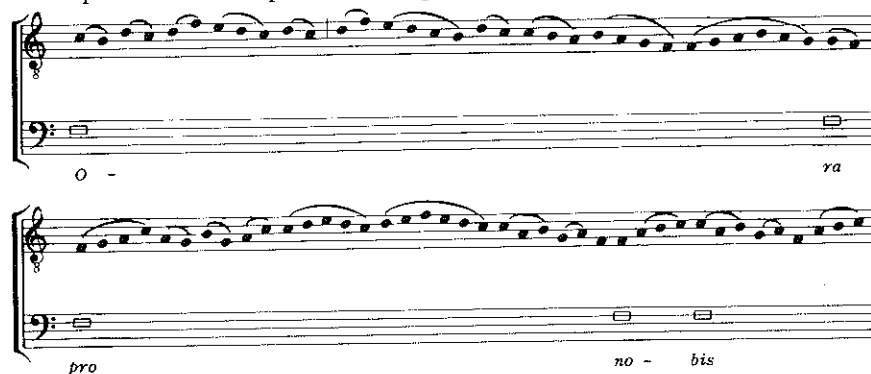
#### THE TWO STYLES OF ST. MARTIAL POLYPHONY

Two contrasting styles of organum are clearly discernible in the polyphony of St. Martial. One, traditionally associated with the School, is known as *florid* or *melismatic organum*. The other, "a kind of developed discant," has only recently been recognized as an important style in St.



Martial polyphony.<sup>14</sup> In melismatic organum, note-against-note writing virtually disappears, and we find instead an organal voice with several or many notes against each note of the chant. The two voices are normally written in score in the manuscripts, but their correct alignment is often difficult to determine.<sup>15</sup> Indications of relative note values are totally lacking. Modern transcriptions of this music, therefore, present no more than personal interpretations that can never be regarded as definitive. There seem to be two possible solutions to the problem of rhythmic relationships between the two voices. Either the plainchant may move in even but extended notes with changing values for the note-groups of different lengths in the organal voice, or that voice may be sung evenly with the notes of the plainchant coming at irregular intervals. The first solution seems preferable when the chant is syllabic and the organal voice has relatively short melismas on each syllable. In the St. Martial repertory, settings of older tropes and sequences usually meet both of these conditions. The sequence *Laude jocunda* (With joyful praise) provides a characteristic example (see AMM, No. 29). Here, the syllabic lower voice, moving at an even pace, maintains its original character and provides the easiest means of keeping the voices together. When melismas of the organal voice are greatly extended, however, that voice must become the controlling factor. Perhaps the most extreme melismatic extension in the St. Martial repertory occurs in the prayer *Ora pro nobis* (Pray for us), the beginning of which is given in Example VIII-8. Here, quite obviously, the lower voice must sustain some notes much longer than others. Less obvious are the exact places where the lower voice should move from one note to the next. The transcription below follows the alignment of the manuscript source as closely as possible.

Example VIII-8: *Ora pro nobis*, Beginning<sup>16</sup>



14. L. Treitler, "The Polyphony of St. Martial," JAMS, 17 (1964), pp. 29-42.

15. Compare the facsimile and transcription of *Viderunt* in Apel, NPM, p. 211, and HAM, No. 27a. See also the facsimile of *Jubilemus* in Parrish, NMM, Pl. XXI.

16. British Museum, Add. 36881, fol. 22.

The different rhythmic solutions for *Laude jocunda* and *Ora pro nobis* seem plausible enough, but decisions are less easy to reach for pieces between these stylistic extremes. Whichever solution is adopted, it is evident that the notes of the original chant become more and more drawn out. As a result of this process, the plainchant, or principal voice, in melismatic organum came to be called the *tenor*, from the Latin *tenere*, "to hold." Thus, throughout the Middle Ages the term *tenor* does not designate a specific type of male voice but refers to one part, usually the lowest, of a polyphonic piece. The nature of these tenor parts suggests that *sustained-note style* would be a more accurate description of melismatic organum. The added voice is melismatic, certainly; but the tenors, as both *Laude jocunda* and *Ora pro nobis* show, may be entirely syllabic. Moreover, extended melismas may and often do occur in "developed discant," the other characteristic style of St. Martial polyphony.

## DEVELOPED-DISCANT STYLE

By the twelfth century, the term *discant* was being used to distinguish syllabic text settings in note-against-note polyphony from the sustained-note style of melismatic organum. At the same time, however, a new development began to enrich this simple discant style by what has been called neume-against-neume writing. Both voices, that is, normally have a single note or a neume of several notes for each syllable of text, but they do not necessarily set the same number of notes against each other. Thus, in developed-discant style we may find two, three, or four notes against one, three against two, four against two or three. Departures from this neumatic setting of the text often occur at the ends of poetic lines, where the penultimate syllable may receive an extended melisma. Such passages differ from the melismas of sustained-note style, in that both voices continue in note-against-note polyphony. The most logical solution to the rhythmic problems of discant style, again left unanswered by the original notation, would seem to be an equal value for each syllable of text and for each neume in melismatic passages. This solution has been applied to the *Benedicamus* trope *Omnis curet homo* (Let every man take care) in AMM, No. 30.

The two examples of St. Martial polyphony in AMM require a few further remarks, both individual and general. *Laude jocunda* is so short, and its tenor displays so little variety, that it does not give the impression of being complete. It consists, in fact, of only the first three sections of a much longer sequence in honor of Saints Peter and Paul. The polyphonic version appears in the same form in two of the St. Martial manuscripts. Only the first half of each double versicle is written beneath the musical score. The second half, usually written in a narrow column, follows immediately after the section to which it belongs.

Above these added texts, one manuscript gives the original sequence melody—that is, the tenor of the preceding polyphonic section. In the other, space was apparently left for the melodies, but only the second half of the third versicle has the monophonic chant above it. This disposition in the manuscripts suggests that the polyphonic first half of each versicle was to be answered by the second half in plainchant. How, or even whether, the rest of the sequence was to be performed remains unknown. Quite possibly, the polyphonic version was meant to be a complete and independent piece. The text does not proceed far enough to define its liturgical function and could serve for any joyful occasion.

The *Benedicamus* trope *Omnis curet* presents a different kind of problem. Like many such tropes, its textual and musical forms follow the structural principle of the sequence. In this case, however, neither text nor music is entirely regular. Each half of the first versicle has a different melody and therefore a different polyphonic setting. The second versicle has not one, but two repeated sections to fit the fourfold subdivision of the text. The third and fourth versicles are normal. This still leaves unexplained the line “Est verbum caro factum” (The word was made flesh). Because it fits neither the rhythm nor the rhyme scheme of the text as a whole, literary scholars have regarded this line as a refrain to be repeated after each versicle. The form of *Omnis curet* would then be *ab R cdd R ee R ff R*. This combination of sequence form with a refrain would not be unique (see Chapter XI, p. 265), but we should note that none of the five versions of *Omnis curet* gives any indication that its second section is to be sung more than once. Perhaps the attempt to regularize the form is a mistake and we should perform *Omnis curet* exactly as it appears in the manuscripts.<sup>17</sup>

Turning from formal to harmonic considerations, we find rather remarkable differences between the sustained-note and discant styles. In the former, elaboration of the upper voice is achieved by melodic ornamentation of notes that form consonances with the tenor. The process of ornamentation naturally introduces numerous dissonances that, in modern terminology, we would call passing or neighboring tones. More unexpected are the occasional appearances of appoggiaturas: seconds resolving to unisons, sevenths to octaves, and sixths to fifths. Because such dissonances do not accord with contemporary theory, attempts have been made to minimize their effect by rhythmic realignment or other editorial adjustments. This seems neither justifiable nor

necessary. In many cases, the dissonances, including appoggiaturas, are clearly present, and we must regard them as an essential element of the style. To that element, indeed, melismatic organum owes much of its historical importance and its musical charm.

The dissonance treatment characteristic of melismatic organum also appears occasionally in discant style. On the whole, however, pieces in this style adhere more closely to procedures outlined by the theorists of the time. Contrary motion predominates, as do consonant intervals, including the third. Counterbalancing this harmonic conservatism is an emphasis on melodic integration of the two voices, particularly in melismas at the ends of poetic lines. To achieve this, composers found various ways to organize and relate melodic motives in the two voices: by sequential repetition, by inversion, by imitation, and by other, more esoteric devices. Because these devices were to remain characteristic of polyphonic writing for many centuries, their appearance in music of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries is of great significance.

## VOICE EXCHANGE

One device, rare in the St. Martial repertory, soon became so characteristic of medieval polyphony that it must be described and illustrated here. Although frequently referred to by its German name *Stimmtausch*, the translation *voice exchange* seems more suitable for discussions in English. Although voice exchange is not present in *Omnis curet*, it does occur in the first section of another *Benedicamus* trope, *Noster cetus*. As we can see in Example VIII-9 below, each voice in measure 2 has the melodic line that the other had in measure 1. The second measure, therefore, merely repeats the first with the voice parts interchanged. Voice exchange also occurs on a smaller scale in the cadential melisma of the same example where two-note cells (x and y) are interchanged, revealing the close relationship between voice exchange and imitation. Taking x and y as a four-note motive (c), we find that the upper voice imitates the lower at a distance of one beat (or neume). Voice exchange, it is clear, is a rather simple process of repetition, in which melodic and harmonic structures remain unchanged. Only contrasting tone qualities in the two voices distinguish between repetitions with voice exchange and those without. Nevertheless, the device was of considerable importance. By itself, voice exchange gave composers one means of controlling the symmetry and design of their polyphony. In addition, it provided a starting point for the development of other, more complex, and more effective contrapuntal devices.

17. *Omnis curet* appears in all four sources of St. Martial polyphony, twice as plainchant and three times in two-voice polyphony. In one polyphonic and both monophonic versions, all repeats are written out in full. As in *Lauda jocunda*, the other polyphonic versions give only the first half of double versicles with a two-voice setting. In the London manuscript, the second versicle is garbled and incomplete (see Parrish, NMM, Pl. XXII).

Example VIII-9: First Section of *Noster cetus*

No - ster ce - tus psal - lat le - tus

Vo - ce si - mul con - so - na

Let our joyful assembly sing together with consonant sound.

### HISTORICAL ROLE OF ST. MARTIAL POLYPHONY

The School of St. Martial has traditionally been regarded as the birthplace of melismatic organum, which was then taken over and brought to full flower at the School of Notre Dame in the second half of the twelfth century. This view needs some correction. In the first place, the manuscript sources do not confirm this chronology. Of the three St. Martial manuscripts that contain polyphony, the oldest dates from the very beginning of the twelfth century. The other two belong to the last half of the century, perhaps even to its last decades. The London manuscript, which does not come from Limoges but duplicates a number of the St. Martial pieces, dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century. It is clear, therefore, that the St. Martial repertory we now possess is representative of the entire twelfth century, and much of it must be contemporary with works of the Notre Dame School.

From the chronology of the manuscript sources we can also learn something of the stylistic development that took place in Limoges during the course of the twelfth century. The traditional view of St. Martial polyphony would lead us to expect a continuing development of melismatic style. What we find is quite the opposite. Melismatic organum predominates in the oldest manuscript, but later sources show a growing preference for the developed-discant style. To account for this shift of emphasis, we must examine the considerations that governed the choice of which style to use. Chants in syllabic style, including the older sequences and *Benedicamus* tropes, consistently received melismatic treatment as organa. If the monophonic chant alternated syllabic style with melismas, however, the latter were given a note-against-note

or discant setting. Both styles might thus appear in the same piece, as they do in *Viderunt Hemanuel* (They have seen Emanuel), a trope of the Christmas Gradual.<sup>18</sup> Such an admixture of styles is perhaps not characteristic of the St. Martial repertory as a whole, and *Viderunt Hemanuel* probably represents a transitional stage leading to the later, more consistent application of discant style to poetic texts. As rhymed and rhythmic verse became the dominant form of religious poetry during the twelfth century, composers evidently felt that the structural regularity of the texts called for a musical regularity that only discant style could give. In their different ways, but working together to some extent, poetry and music developed the technical devices that reflect the spirit of their age, the spirit that also produced the regularity, symmetry, and balance of early Gothic cathedrals.

It is, then, the tradition of polyphonic performance for versus, tropes, and sequences that explains the later emphasis on discant style in St. Martial polyphony. The same tradition also distinguishes the School of St. Martial from the School of Notre Dame in Paris. In the latter, composers first concentrated on setting the prose texts of standard liturgical chants. As a result, they produced greatly expanded forms of melismatic organum before beginning to explore the possibilities for musical development inherent in discant style. By the thirteenth century, polyphonic composition no longer flourished in Limoges and southern France, probably for the same reasons that brought the activity of the troubadours to a close (see Chapter XI). The center of musical activity shifted to Paris, and the School of Notre Dame became the starting point for the development of new polyphonic forms in the later Middle Ages.

### POLYPHONY AT SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Before we consider the contributions of the Notre Dame School, we must look at a collection of polyphony from Santiago de Compostela in the northwestern Spanish province of Galicia. Because the Cathedral of Santiago (St. James) sheltered the reputed relics of James the Apostle, Compostela rivaled Rome and Jerusalem as a place of pilgrimage throughout the Middle Ages. The Cathedral Library of Santiago still preserves a *Liber Sancti Jacobi* (Book of St. James) that has been described as propaganda to promote the pilgrimage. From the social historian's viewpoint, one of the most interesting sections of the manuscript is a guide for twelfth-century tourists, where we find descriptions of the main roads to Compostela, of important buildings and shrines to visit en route, and of the character—good or bad—of people living in the regions along the way. For us, the *Liber Sancti Jacobi* is interesting be-

18. HAM, No. 27a.



Detail from the Portico de la gloria (1166–88) of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Two elders are depicted playing the hurdy-gurdy.

cause of its preservation of the complete services, with their music, for the Vigil and Feast of St. James as they were performed in the middle of the twelfth century.<sup>19</sup> We have already mentioned these services in connection with the creation of new plainchant settings for Offices (see Chapter VII). Now we find that the same manuscript provides an important collection of twelfth-century polyphony.

Because the *Liber Sancti Jacobi* credits Pope Calixtine II (d. 1124) with the authorship of the Offices and Masses for the Feast of St. James, the manuscript is often called the Codex Calixtinus. Just how much Calixtine had to do with creating these services remains unknown, but it is highly unlikely that he compiled all of their texts and composed their plainchant settings. Perhaps the attribution is no more than a graceful compliment to the Pope, who recognized the importance of Compostela by raising it to the rank of an archiepiscopal see in 1120. Additional items, such as sequences and tropes, versus and conducti, and all the polyphonic pieces, are credited to a number of different authors—mostly bishops—from places as widely separated as Jerusalem, Rome, Paris, and Galicia. Unfortunately, scholars also believe these attributions are unreliable. It may be significant, nevertheless, that the men whose names are attached to polyphonic pieces came, almost without exception, from cities in central and northern France.

19. For modern editions of this manuscript and its music, see the Bibliography.

The entire repertory of the Codex Calixtinus possesses great historical as well as musical interest. The monophonic settings of liturgical items tell us much about the state of plainchant composition in the twelfth century. Tropes and sequences give a clear picture of the way the liturgy was expanded and embellished on great Feast Days. The Mass of the Day, for example, includes elaborate tropes of the Introit and the Epistle, as well as troped versions of all items of the Ordinary except the Credo. Processional versus, or conducti, add to our knowledge of the history of that genre. Here, however, our primary concern is with the polyphony that forms an appendix at the end of the manuscript. Scholars date the Codex Calixtinus about 1140, but the appendix may be a somewhat later addition. Nevertheless, its contents clearly represent the state of polyphonic composition around the middle of the twelfth century.

The polyphonic repertory of Santiago de Compostela consists of twenty-one pieces, twenty of which appear in the concluding appendix of the Codex Calixtinus. The twenty-first piece is a monophonic conductus in the main body of the manuscript to which a second voice has been added. One other monophonic conductus receives the same treatment, but that one also appears in the collection of polyphony. Of the total of twenty-one pieces, then, two are definitely identified as conducti, and three more may belong to this category, since they consist of strophic poems that do not seem to have a specific liturgical function. *Benedicamus* tropes (four) and untroped settings of *Benedicamus* melodies (three) constitute exactly one third of the repertory. In addition there are two settings of well-known Kyrie tropes.<sup>20</sup> More unexpected are polyphonic settings of the solo portions of six responsorial chants, including the Gradual and Alleluia from the Mass of the Day and four of the twelve Office responsories. To the last of these—the final responsory of Matins that was also sung at Second Vespers—is appended a “prose” that adds words and an organal voice to the final melisma of the respond.

The emphasis on responsorial chants in the polyphony of Compostela establishes a primary distinction between its repertory and that of St. Martial. Other differences between the two repertories are much slighter. Again we find the sustained-note and discant styles, now used with even greater consistency. The poetic texts of conducti and *Benedicamus* tropes are invariably set in discant style. Just as invariably, settings of untroped *Benedicamus* melodies and of responsorial chants are in sustained-note style. In the latter, it is important to note, the two styles rarely appear together. Even the long melismas of the plainchant are further extended by being set in sustained-note style. This is less evident in the Office responsories than in the Gradual and Alleluia of the Mass, where we find a sustained-note setting of a melisma with no

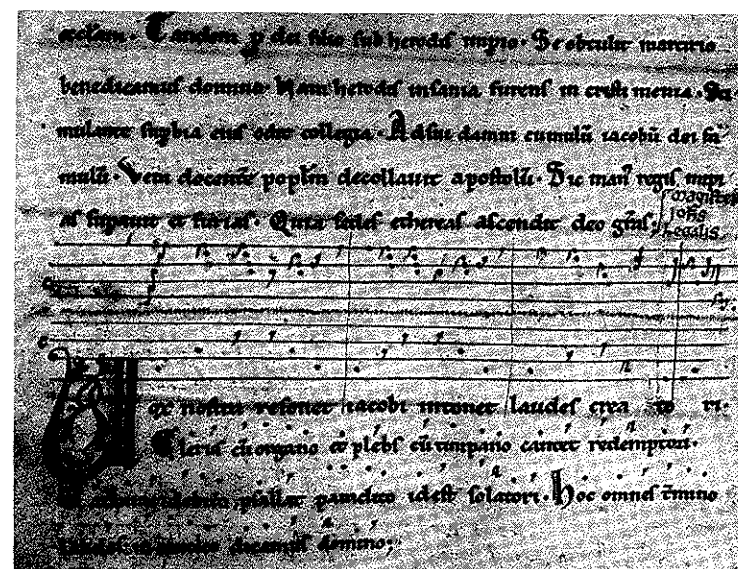
20. For the setting of *Cunctipotens genitor* in sustained-note style, see HAM, No. 27b.

fewer than thirty-seven notes. As we shall see, this stylistic consistency in the setting of responsorial chants distinguishes the repertory of Compostela from that of the School of Notre Dame, which we must probably regard as a later development. For the rest, however, the same principles govern the application of polyphony to responsorial chants in both repertories. We may see these principles at work in *Huic Jacobo* (To this James), one of the Office responsories of the Codex Calixtinus (AMM, No. 31). Of the opening respond, only the short solo intonation receives a polyphonic setting. The choir then sings the remainder in its original monophonic form. The solo verse again receives a polyphonic setting that also serves for the Doxology, and the choir answers each time with the closing section of the respond. This characteristic alternation of organum and plainchant reveals one of the most fundamental characteristics of medieval polyphony in general. Rather than being choral, it is essentially music for a small ensemble of soloists. From our greater exposure to music of later times, we normally expect choral performance of polyphony, and we think of solo song as being a single melody against a harmonic background. We must not forget that the situation is approximately reversed in the Middle Ages. Throughout the period, soloists retain almost exclusive rights to the performance of polyphony, their primary vehicle for the demonstration of improvisatory skill and vocal virtuosity.

The sustained-note style of *Huic Jacobo* and of the other polyphonic settings of responsorial chants in the Codex Calixtinus raises particularly difficult problems of vertical alignment. Perhaps the only procedure that we can follow consistently in performing this music is to have the two voices begin each new syllable together. But this does not help in places where the tenor has two or more notes for one syllable. Sometimes the alignment in the manuscript suggests possible solutions, but it too often fails to answer all the questions. What do we do, for example, in the frequent instances when a two-note ligature in the tenor appears against two or more ligatures in the organal voice?<sup>21</sup> Some believe that the tenor should move to its next note when it can form a consonance with the other voice. To accomplish this, the tenor notes sometimes sound with the first, sometimes with the last, and sometimes with a middle note of a ligature. The inconsistency of this procedure and the jerky movement of the tenor that is its result make it somewhat less than satisfactory. The music itself provides considerable evidence that contemporary performers and composers were not afraid of momentary dissonant clashes. Let us be as bold.

In the transcription of *Huic Jacobo*, then, the voices are aligned so that each tenor note coincides with the first note of a ligature in the organal voice, which should probably be performed in relatively even note val-

21. See the second measure of AMM, No. 31.



An example of two-part organum from the Codex Calixtinus, Santiago de Compostela. *Vox nostra resonet*, a trope of *Benedicamus Domino*, is attributed to a Magister Johannes Legalis, c. 1155.

ues. The style must remain free and rhapsodic, however, with no hint of rhythmic rigidity. For this reason, the transcription does not use modern note values, but the notation in score makes it easier for the singers to keep together. Additional help comes from the barlines that are present in the manuscript. As a rule, these lines mark the beginning of a word or syllable, but many of them also appear to indicate musical phrases that, with rare exceptions, begin and end on perfect consonances. Thus the phrases establish the essential harmonic relationships between the voices and give shape to a melismatic flow that might otherwise seem formless and undirected.

## DISCANT STYLE IN THE COMPOSTELA REPERTORY

Discant style in the repertory of Compostela differs scarcely at all from that of the School of St. Martial. Indeed, there is one instance of a musical concordance between the two repertories.<sup>22</sup> The setting of *Noster cetus* (Example VIII-9) that appears in three St. Martial sources turns up at Compostela with a different *Benedicamus* trope, *Ad supermi Regis decus* (In honor of the King on high).<sup>23</sup>

22. NOHM, 2, pp. 298-99. Discovery of this concordance disposes of Anselm Hughes's assertion that *Ad supermi* represents the normal "Spanish" treatment of consonance and dissonance as opposed to "Anglo-French."

23. A complete transcription of *Noster cetus* is available in J. Marshall, "Hidden Polyphony in a Manuscript from St. Martial de Limoges," JAMS, 15 (1962), p. 142. For *Ad supermi*, see Treitler, "The Polyphony of St. Martial," p. 36.

The discant style of Compostela, then, will not be new, but we may illustrate its application to a different type of text, the versus or conductus (AMM, No. 32). *Nostra phalans plaudat leta* (Let our company praise joyfully) is the first polyphonic piece in the Codex Calixtinus.<sup>24</sup> The text does not appear to have a specific liturgical function, although the word "Domino" in the final stanza, with a resulting irregularity in the rhyme scheme, suggests that the poem could be another trope of *Benedicamus Domino*. In any case, the text is clearly related to celebrations at Santiago de Compostela. Each of the poem's four stanzas consists of four lines plus a one-line refrain which rhymes with the preceding line except in the final stanza. In every other respect, the four stanzas of *Nostra phalans* are identical in structure and are sung to the same music. This use of strophic form is common but not invariable in settings of conducti and often makes them musically indistinguishable from hymns. They resemble hymns too in the variety of their internal structure. *Nostra phalans*, for example, appears at first glance to be a continuous form with no pattern of phrase repetitions. More careful examination reveals that the third phrase, after a different beginning on the first two syllables, continues as a variation of the first. Thus, *Nostra phalans* falls into the pattern *aba'c D*, in which the capital letter indicates the refrain. We should note, finally, that the piece has no extended and systematically organized melismas such as are found in other examples of discant style. In later conducti, the presence or absence of such melismas creates two distinct types of musical settings.

We cannot leave the Codex Calixtinus without brief mention of its most famous composition, the first example of three-voice polyphony. *Congaudeant Catholici* (Let Catholics rejoice together) follows *Nostra phalans* on the first page of the polyphonic collection.<sup>25</sup> One voice appears alone on the upper staff, but the lower staff contains two voices, one written in red, the other in black ink. This difference is not evident in most photographic reproductions, and when it has been recognized it has been assumed that one voice was added later. However, the use of different colored inks to distinguish two voices on the same staff appears to have been an accepted, if not very common, device for saving space. There is really no reason to doubt, therefore, that *Congaudeant Catholici* was originally created as a three-voice composition. To judge by the musical style, moreover, one would suspect that the upper voice was created last. The two lower voices move in note-against-note counterpoint that might have served to illustrate theoretical descriptions of free organum. The third voice, more elaborate and flowing, has from one to five notes for each syllable of text or each neume of the final melisma in discant style.

24. Facsimile in Parrish, NMM, Pl. XXIII.

25. Same Plate (XXIII) in Parrish, NMM, with various rhythmic interpretations on pp. 69–71. Numerous transcriptions are available; see Reese, MMA, p. 268 and NOHM, 2, p. 305.

King David, the creator of psalms, is depicted playing a three-string vihuela de arco (rebec). The Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.



*Congaudeant Catholici* is sometimes called a "pilgrim's song," with the suggestion either stated or implied that it might have been sung on the way to and from Compostela as well as in the cathedral. For a number of reasons we should not take the suggestion too seriously. The complete text of *Congaudeant* shows that it is a *Benedicamus* trope cast in strophic form with a refrain. Each of its seven stanzas, all sung to the same music, consists of two lines plus the words "die ista" (this day). This simplicity of form is perhaps the only element of the song that would make it suitable for untutored singers. It is unlikely, however, that they would perform three-voice polyphony in an age when even two-voice settings of secular or "popular" songs were unknown. They could have sung the tenor alone, of course, if it ever existed as an independent setting of the text. We cannot know whether returning pilgrims hummed or sang melodies they had heard in Compostela, but there is no evidence that any of the pieces in the Codex Calixtinus originated as pilgrim songs or were intended for performance by the general populace. Indeed, *Congaudeant Catholici* calls for rejoicing by Catholics and citizens of heaven, but directs the clergy to devote itself to beautiful songs and chants this day.<sup>26</sup> It is to the Codex Calixtinus that we owe our knowledge of the songs and chants the clergy sang on the Feast of St. James at Santiago de Compostela.

26. The second "stanza" reads: "Clerus pulcris carminibus / studeat atque cantibus / die ista."



The origin of the Compostela repertory remains unknown, but it is probably wrong to regard it as music by Spanish composers. A remark on the page before the collection of polyphonic pieces (fol. 184v) states that the manuscript was written in a number of different places, but principally at the great Benedictine Abbey of Cluny. The other places listed correspond with the names and titles of the authors to whom the musical items are attributed. Although these attributions are thought to be apocryphal, they suggest that the musical repertory was not the unified product of composers working together in Compostela or any other single locality. Supporting evidence for this view comes from the presence of the one item from St. Martial and the settings of responsorial chants, a class of polyphony that is notably absent from the St. Martial repertory. There might even be some significance in the attribution of *Congaudeant Catholici* to a Magister Albertus of Paris, the city that was soon to take the lead in the further development of polyphony. The Codex Calixtinus as a whole appears to be of French origin, and the musical notation is of the type found in contemporary plainchant manuscripts from the region of central France. Perhaps the Benedictines of Cluny, who greatly influenced the religious establishments of northern Spain in the twelfth century, did prepare the Codex Calixtinus for the Cathedral of Santiago and did assemble the collection of polyphony from a variety of sources. That collection, at any rate, must preserve much more than an isolated and purely local tradition of polyphonic performance. Instead, the Codex Calixtinus provides us with a priceless record of the general state of religious music, both polyphonic and monophonic, about the middle of the twelfth century.

## CHAPTER IX

### The School of Notre Dame, I: Organum

During the twelfth century, northern France, with Paris as its natural center, gradually assumed the cultural and intellectual leadership of western Europe. Many factors contributed to this development, but among the most important were the growth and prosperity of the cities, the increasing power and prestige of the French kings, and the expansion of the cathedral schools that led to the formation of the University of Paris in the early years of the thirteenth century. The economic recovery of Europe in the eleventh century brought with it a great increase in population and provided a new basis for the organization of society. Hitherto rural and feudal, that society became increasingly urban and commercial. The renewed vigor of the cities and the wealth of their middle-class citizens, the bourgeoisie, made possible the architectural monuments of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that are still the glory of Europe. The same factors, in combination with the increased population, swelled attendance at the schools and universities, whose intellectual achievements were perhaps even more important than cathedrals in determining the course of Western civilization. By the end of the twelfth century, the schools at Bologna and Paris had won the renown that was to make them the "mother universities of Europe." Bologna emphasized the study of jurisprudence, while Paris concentrated on theology and the liberal arts. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that the authors of many thirteenth-century musical treatises were associated with the University of Paris. The medieval habit of preserving anonymity in musical sources keeps us from knowing whether the Parisian theorists were also composers. Paris so dominated the field of polyphonic composition, however, that a tendency exists to regard as "peripheral" all music of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries that originated elsewhere in Europe. Yet peripheral styles and conservative practices in both the improvisation and composition of organum probably give a more accurate picture of the general state of contemporary polyphony. Paris and the School of Notre Dame stood far out in front in the development of new musical forms and styles, and—as is often the case with avant-garde composers—their music opened up new paths for succeed-